

findings and proposed recommendations to replace in whole or in part the findings and recommendations contained in the tentative determination. Any such person may also file, at the same time, a brief in support of his proposals, together with references to relevant pages of transcript and to relevant exhibits. Within 10 days thereafter each participant may file a reply brief concerning alternative proposals. Oral argument may be held at the discretion of the Presiding Officer on motion of any hearing participant or sua sponte.

**§ 57.811 Recommended decision.**

As soon as practicable after the conclusion of the hearing, one or more responsible employees of the Agency shall evaluate the record for preparation of a recommended decision and shall prepare and file a recommended decision with the Hearing Clerk. The employee(s) preparing the decision will generally be members of the hearing panel and may include the Presiding Officer. Such employee(s) may consult with and receive assistance from any member of the hearing panel in drafting a recommended decision and may also delegate the preparation of the recommended decision to the panel or to any member or members of it. This decision shall contain the same elements as the tentative determination. After the recommended decision has been filed, the Hearing Clerk shall serve a copy of such decision on each hearing participant and upon the Administrator.

**§ 57.812 Appeal from or review of recommended decision.**

(a) *Exceptions.* (1) Within 20 days after service of the recommended decision, any hearing participant may take exception to any matter set forth in such decision or to any adverse order or ruling of the Presiding Officer prior to or during the hearing to which such participant objected, and may appeal such exceptions to the Administrator by filing them in writing with the Hearing Clerk. Such exceptions shall contain alternative findings and recommendations, together with references to the relevant pages of the record and recommended decision. A copy of each

document taking exception to the recommended decision shall be served upon every other hearing participant. Within the same period of time each party filing exceptions shall file with the Administrator and shall serve upon all hearing participants a brief concerning each of the exceptions being appealed. Each brief shall include page references to the relevant portions of the record and to the recommended decision.

(2) Within 10 days of the service of exceptions and briefs under paragraph (a)(1) of this section, any hearing participant may file and serve a reply brief responding to exceptions or arguments raised by any other hearing participant together with references to the relevant portions of the record, recommended decision, or opposing brief. Reply briefs shall not, however, raise additional exceptions.

(b) *Sua sponte review by the Administrator.* Whenever the Administrator determines *sua sponte* to review a recommended decision, notice of such intention shall be served upon the parties by the Hearing Clerk within 30 days after the date of service of the recommended decision. Such notice shall include a statement of issues to be briefed by the hearing participants and a time schedule for the service and filing of briefs.

(c) *Scope of appeal or review.* The appeal of the recommended decision shall be limited to the issues raised by the appellant, except when the Administrator determines that additional issues should be briefed or argued. If the Administrator determines that briefing or argument of additional issues is warranted, all hearing participants shall be given reasonable written notice of such determination to permit preparation of adequate argument.

(d) *Argument before the Administrator.* The Administrator may, upon request by a party or sua sponte, set a matter for oral argument. The time and place for such oral argument shall be assigned after giving consideration to the convenience of the parties.

**§ 57.813 Final decision.**

(a) *After review.* As soon as practicable after all appeal or other review proceedings have been completed, the